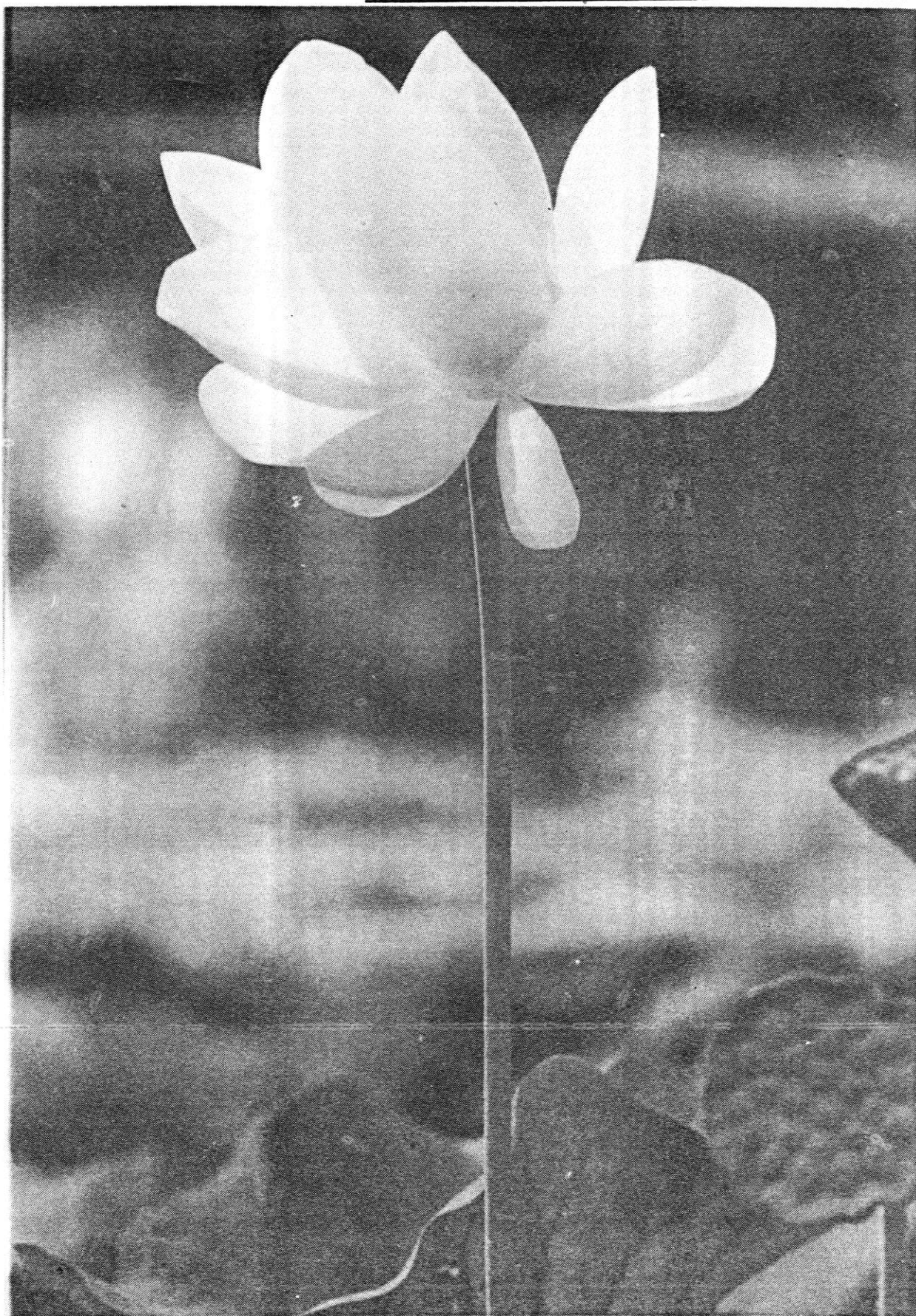


Pranam •

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Supreme Command

Those who perform sadhana twice a day regularly, the thought of Parama Purusa will certainly arise in their minds at the time of death; their liberation is a sure guarantee. Therefore every Ananda Margii will have to perform sadhana twice a day invariably - verily is this the command of the Lord. Without Yama and Niyama, sadhana is an impossibility; hence the Lord's command is also to follow Yama and Niyama. Disobedience to this command is nothing but to throw oneself into the tortures of animal life for crores of years. That no one should undergo torments such as these, that everyone might be enabled to enjoy the eternal blessedness under the loving shelter of the Lord, it is the bounden duty of every Ananda Margii to endeavour to bring all to the path of bliss. Verily is this a part and parcel of sadhana to lead others along the path of righteousness.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti



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Editorial

It is true that for every step we take towards Parama Purusa, He takes ten towards us. However, it is also true that for every step we take towards Him, Avidyamaya (the force of spiritual discouragement) also takes several steps towards us, or at least it seems that way. Every time we move forward Avidya comes with all its might to distract or prevent our movement to our Goal. And of course, if we take to the path of Avidya (worldliness), then Vidya (spiritual conscience) will also attack us. As Baba says: "Vidya or Avidya - select any of the two and the other is sure to stand athwart...the Avidya force declares war on those whose desire or inclination is towards Vidya." (Ananda Marga Ideology and Way of Life in a Nutshell, p 288)

We can see this in both our external and internal life. When trying to establish some ideological or benevolent project or work innumerable obstacles come our way. Similarly, whenever trying to go close to Him internally our mind may rebel or many worldly temptations may come to allure us away from Him. Sometimes these tricks of Avidya can be mistaken to mean that Ba'ba' does not want us to do these things, rather than realising it simply means we must be more determined and faithful that by His grace alone we will be successful. As Baba says: "...those whose movement is truly towards vidya, who are determined to follow the path of vidya by sacrificing their all, will eventually become immune to all obstacles. . . When the sadhaka will stand untrammelled and resolute, with the courage of his or her conviction and self-confidence, all snags and dangers will gradually wither away - will timidly disappear from his or her path. Thus shall proclaim the sadhaka thunderingly to the obstacles and dangers, " You do your work and I will do mine. I have

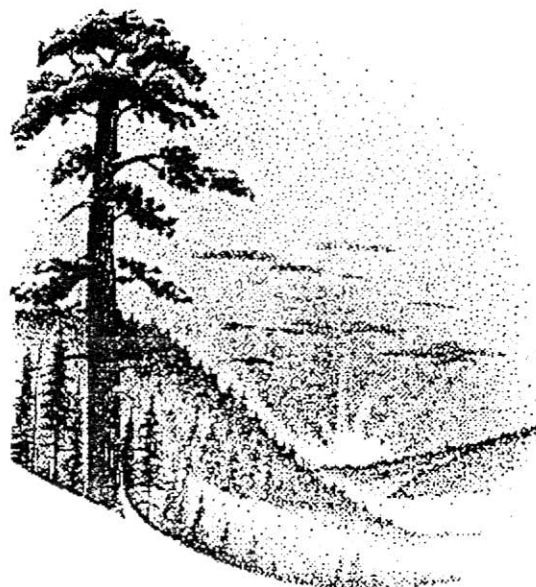
no road behind me to retrace my footsteps." What fear or loss can there be for those who have sacrificed their all for the attainment of their goal?...By these obstacles sadhakas can understand that their spiritual practice is on the right track. Spiritual philosophy comes into being only when sadhaka, struggling with avidya's hindrances, vindicates their move towards Brahma after defeating the base propensities of avidya by their own intellect and judgement." (Ananda Marga Ideology, p 289)

The sensuous and materialistic longings of Avidya die hard; indeed they may seem impossible to truly remove or control. Philosophy states that by our own effort we cannot defeat the influence of Avidyamaya. Only by surrendering to His lotus feet is it possible. As Baba states: "You derive your vital energy from the eternal world - a gift of Parama Purusa. Similarly, the strength to move towards the Supreme Father will also be obtained from Him. But the tragedy is that you don't ask for the spiritual force from Him. Your sole concentration is on earning name, fame, money, promotion, prestige and other worldly gains. You remain so busy with your worldly desires that you hardly manage to ask for spiritual strength. . . The strength to move forwards lies within you- only impediment being the encumbrance of

sins that is on your head due to your past actions. Remove the "burden", be light and march on." ("Spiritual Cult: Progress of Matter to Subtlest Entity", Prajina Bharati, October 1991)

While it may be easy to forget the purpose of our existence, of our struggling, it cannot be an excuse that can be allowed to last for long. Life is too short, there is too much to do and all of it must ultimately be done with Him in mind, as an act of loving service to Him. He can give us the capacity to realise Him if we really want to; but the desire must be strong. Good satsaunga (especially dharma cakra and conferences), svadhyaya & kiirtana will increase this desire. Ba'ba' is the centre of our life, not the world or its obstacles or problems. With Him constantly in mind then even the 'obstacle' becomes an aid to realising Him, the only real Goal of our life.

Na'rada Muni



Taking the Opposite Stance in Battle

(continued from previous issue)

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

When someone comes in the shelter of Parama Purus'a, then He elevates them from all psychic distortions. You should know that there are certain social groups who, at their place of worship, confess to the lord, "I am a sinner . . . I am a sinner . . ." This is a defective approach, an unpsychological approach. Parama Purus'a knows more than you whether you are a sinner or not, so what is the necessity of telling Him? What news can you report to a person who already knows all the intimate details of your life? Is it not ludicrous to retell the stories of your grandfather's house to your mother, for certainly she knows them better than you!

Then what should be the proper approach to Parama Purus'a?

*Shuddho'si buddho'si niranjano'si
Sam'sa'rama'ya' parivarjito'si
Sam'sa'rasvapnam' tyaja moha
nidra'm
Mada'lasollapamuva'ca
putram.*

"You are pure, you are enlightened, you are completely unblemished; you are free from the snares of this illusory world.

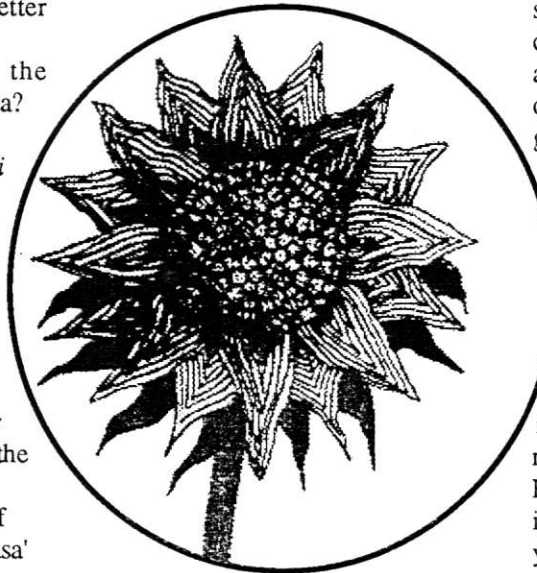
Give up this dream of worldly life, thus spoke Mada'lasa' to her son."

You should think within that you are ever pure and enlightened - you are a child of Parama Purus'a. You should think that you are like a newborn baby who remains untouched or unaffected by the dirt and dross of sin. Why should you approach Parama Purus'a as a sinner?

The relationship between the Lord and human beings is one of close family ties. Does a small child in the family ever go to its parents

saying, "I am a sinner, I am wicked, please forgive me, my parents?" Certainly a child will never say this. Even a truly wicked person comes to his mother and says, "Dear Mummy, I am very hungry, please give me food." He will never speak of his sins.

However, when Parama Purus'a knows that the sense of sin harms human beings and creates obstacles in the path of their spiritual progress, He steals the sins of His devotees. What is stealing? If one takes an object of another person without permission, this is called stealing. And what is robbery?



When someone takes away someone's property forcibly but with prior intimation, this is termed as robbery. Here what Hari is doing is not robbery but stealing, because if He says to His devotees, "Oh my children, give me all your accumulated sins," certainly no one would agree to do so; rather they would say, "How can we give our sins to You? We can give You all sorts of gifts - but how can we give You our sins?" Thus when Parama Purus'a sees that the

devotees are unwilling to part with their sins, He forcibly steals them away.

So towards the Entity who is so close to you, is it proper for you to entertain such false feelings of *abhi-ma'na* (inflated ego), *gaorava* (self-aggrandizement) and *pratis'ta* (prestige)? Caetanaya Mahaprabhu, to help human beings overcome this sense of vanity and lethargy, advised them to take a psychological approach: *trn'adapi suniicena* - be as humble as the grass. When people feel that others are not giving them proper regard, and as a result they feel psychically wounded, they should accept this golden principle to counteract this false sense of self-aggrandizement: one should consider oneself to be even humbler than the grass.

But remember that this refers to individual and not collective behaviour. In collective life, pride should not be allowed to raise its head, it should not be condoned. In collective life one has no right to forgive anyone; in individual life you can extend maximum forgiveness - rather, the more forgiveness, the better. Forgiveness is something personal; it is not a collective matter. Suppose you are an inhabitant of India. If someone harms the collective life of India, you must not forgive them. Likewise, as you belong to the entire human race, you must not forgive anyone who harms humanity. But in individual life, however much one might harm you, you may forgive that person to the greatest extent possible. Thus it is said that one should be as humble as the grass. But remember that grass, although humble, is not insignificant: the universal life is manifested in grass. Without grass it would have been impossible for

human beings to survive.

You should further remember that in practical life, no spiritual aspirant would like to be a banyan tree or a palm tree. A banyan tree as it grows, extends its branches in all directions. Many people enjoy the wide shade of such a huge tree, but its greatest defect is that it does not give any opportunity to other plants to grow under its shade. Likewise, one should not aspire to become like a palm tree which raises its head higher and higher but does not provide shade to anyone. So you should not emulate the examples of either the banyan tree or the palm tree - you should rather be as humble as the grass. It remains underfoot, but how luxuriantly it grows from there! Mother Earth remains under the feet of all beings, but does this do insult to her in any respect? Sometimes a child stands on the lap of its mother; does this harm or insult the mother? Not at all. On the contrary, the mother is elevated thereby.

Hence it is said, *trn'a'dapi suniicena taroriva sahis'n'una'* - one must be humbler than the grass, and more tolerant than the trees.

Likewise when one's sense of aggrandizement is wounded, one becomes intolerant. Suppose someone claims that huge roses have grown in his garden, but in reality the flowers are not that big. If someone argues, "No, no, the roses are not all that large - you are telling us lies! The roses in your garden are actually quite small!" The owner of the garden will fly into a rage. Thus when someone's inflated ego is pinched, he or she becomes extremely angry.

Thus human beings will have to practice tolerance. But this spirit of tolerance must be developed only in individual life; in collective life it must not be expressed. If a country illegally grabs even one inch of your land you must take one mile of the aggressor's land; no spirit of tolerance in this regard is permissible. If you show your tolerance then they will take one inch today and one mile tomorrow. However, you can practice toleration as much as possi-

ble in individual life, and that will be considered a sign of greatness.

Ama'niinam' ma'nadeyam': You expect that people should respect and honour you, but you never think that you should also respect and honour others. *Sa'gra'me vaepari-ityam'*: this principle has already been explained. You long for name and fame, and you are burning with impatience because you are not receiving the honour you expect. So you must use the reverse strategy: give respect to those whom no one gives respect to, and your mind will become balanced and at peace. When beggars are stranded by the wayside, do you ever care to salute

***Namanti phalinah
vrks'ah: When trees are laden
with fruits they do not raise
their heads high, rather they
bend down low: this is the sign
of greatness.***

them? Why not? Are they not dignified expressions of the same One Supreme Consciousness? But when well-dressed, high-placed ministers and leaders stand before you, you lie prostrate before them - why this discrimination? All are manifestations of one and the same God: yet one person you greet warmly and another you utterly neglect - why this differential treatment? It means that there is a hidden sense of flattery in your mind and you are surreptitiously trying to gain honour from the elite. Rather you must give respect to those who do not receive respect from anyone; in this way your minds will become balanced and you will progress.

As ideal human beings you should not wait to give namaskar after another has greeted you: you should rather take the first opportunity to greet others. When someone greets you, it is merely common courtesy for you to salute back; you do not become an ideal human being thereby. Rather one who seizes the first opportunity to salute others is the ideal. So you should always make an effort to do namaskar to

others first: you should not care whether the person whom you greet will greet you in return or not. (When people come to me during personal contact, I greet them first whether they salute me or not.) By giving honour to others you will not be belittled, you will rather enhance your prestige. *Namanti phalinah vrks'ah*: When trees are laden with fruits they do not raise their heads high, rather they bend down low: this is the sign of greatness.

Kiirtaniya sada'harih - one should always sing the glory of the Lord. It is the frailty of human beings that when a few of them group together, they indulge in criticizing or mudslinging others. This leads to psychic degradation. In fact people should perform such actions which will lead to psychic elevation, actions which give the mind no scope for degeneration. The easiest way to do this is to sing the glories of the Supreme Entity whose very thought automatically elevates the mind.

Chanting the name of Parama Purus'a aloud is called *kiirtana*. For the vibration created in the atmosphere by *kiirtana* will influence others also. But if one's mental ideation is conveyed only to Parama Purus'a without affecting other human beings, this is called *bhajana*. So *bhajana* is something purely personal; it has no collective aspect. *Kiirtana* is more beneficial than *bhajana*, and hence it is said *kiirtaniyah sada' harih*: Whenever you find time, do *kiirtana* loudly and you will never become degenerated because by chanting the Lord's holy name the mind remains elevated. Mudslinging and criticizing is thereby stopped forever, and hence *kiirtana* averts the degradation of the human mind. You should always remember that in every sphere of life - social, political, economic, psychic, and spiritual - you should always follow the principle of "taking the opposite stance": there is no exception to this rule. Victory will surely be yours.

DMC Discourse, Calcutta,
November 29, 197

Chronicle of Samadhi

Ac Jyotiprakash Brc

When I was first posted in Brisbane region, I was very happy to meet many senior Margiis. I was so happy to listen to them, to their spiritual experience and feeling, to hear of their love for Ba'ba', and of their Ba'ba' dreams. They looked to me like giants in meditation. So, on the one hand, I was so happy to be so lucky to be near those people, to learn from them. But, on the other hand, I started to feel some frustration because I was thinking, "I am an acarya. I am supposed to experience all this blissful meditational feeling. I am supposed to inspire, to help them." And I was feeling like a baby, a beginner in meditation. I started to feel not so useful.

Yes, it is true, I am close to Ba'ba'. The way that Ba'ba' chose me was overwhelming to me. When I think about the first time we met, I just feel so happy. That is why, within a few weeks of meeting Him, I went to training centre, just because I felt that I had known Him for ages and I felt like I was coming back to my true home. But still, internally, I was feeling totally unprepared, not ready to face such a big task.

Then, a few months ago, one Margii approached me asking me to contribute some Ba'ba' dreams for a book which was to be a collection of Ba'ba' dreams of Suva Sector Margiis. I replied that it was an excellent idea, but unfortunately I could not help because I have never had any pure, strong and intense spiritual experience with Ba'ba'. Rather than be surprised, this Margii replied with calmness and confidence (the confidence which comes only from those who know Ba'ba'), "It will

happen." Then I forgot everything. A few months later I was working in Hobart and something extraordinary happened...

One fine and beautiful early morning, I sat in meditation and like a "click!" in the soul, everything was so clear - the concentration was spontaneous and automatic. Without any effort, as soon as I closed my eyes, a different feeling came through me. I felt that I was out of time, out of space, suspended there. I could stay there forever in that heaven of sweet peace. When I came back I tried to



think what had happened and began to write down some of the feelings I had. Usually, I do not write anything after my meditation, but that morning was something extremely special that I have never experienced before.

When your tears are pouring down from your eyes, rolling down from your cheeks, the feeling of love for the Lord is indescribable, incomparable. Your voice becomes sweeter and sweeter, your skin becomes softer and softer, your hair more delicate. All your body is shaking for the Supreme, full of devotion. The path is clear in front of you, radiant like a glimpse of heaven. In that state of mind you are your true self. You realize that you are Brahma. In that moment you understand everything. You are everything, the Universe is passing through you! There is

nothing similar in the world. There is nothing with the same pleasure, with the same intensity, nothing can be compared with that subtle feeling. When you experience this, you know that you are on the right path and you know that you do not have to wait for long. Sit and meditate, contemplate the lotus of the Divine Self within you and within everyone and everything permeate the Universe. It is as if your life is justified in that very moment, in that very second. The purpose of all your life is fulfilled and when this happens you have that

very, very intuitional feeling that this is the reason you have come into being - the purpose of life. You understand where you are coming from, who you are and where you are going. It is beautiful!

Now I know I can die without fear, without worry. Now I do not need

anything anymore.

It is so nice, there is only one thing left - that I am here in this physical body and the One who gave me this great unbelievable gift wants something to be done in this world by me as a renunciant, a *sannyasin*. I do not know what, but I know that He wants something and I am happy to do it. For I know that otherwise there will not be any reason for me to be, for me to stay here.

In that very moment you understand not only the purpose of this life, but all lives, past and future. You feel you are travelling through the depths of eternity. I can hold You, You are free like a bird. It is beautiful that in this time of our lives, out two roads come across each other and we meet. It is very auspicious. Awake,

awake, a golden future is ready, waiting for you. I cannot belong to anyone, only to the Supreme, because I am for everyone. I feel so pure. It is like I have taken a bath in the holy river of Your love. I feel like an innocent child in Your lap. I have drunk from the Divine cup of Your Love. I am intoxicated after I have drunk Your Divine nectar. I have swum into the ocean of Your bliss. I dive deeper and deeper into Your smiling heart.

My senses are full of sensation, feeling satisfied, fulfilled. All my senses are awake, like they never have been before, awake for the spiritual longing. All my being is tensed, like the string of a bow before shooting the arrow. My being is awake, thinking about the lord, perhaps the senses become stronger and stronger for the feeling of Love. You can smell, you can hear, you can see, you can touch, you can taste, Love, more and more powerful. The senses expand with the mind. In this moment of enjoyment, of Supreme pleasure, be receptive, perceive the Love of the Lord emanate from everywhere and everyone, like a spring - incessant, flowing.

When the senses become stronger and stronger, the day will come when they will become intoxicated so much with the Divine Love that they will lose consciousness. They will stop working due to overdose and, completely drunk, you lose your consciousness and fall into samadhi.

You fill my mind like a mantra!

I saw my life like a flash before my eyes. It was as if I was watching a movie on the screen, but with an indescribable speed. I saw my life, the crucial points - all the things happening, all connected together for the first time, with the clear cause and effect, why things happened in that way. I saw from my childhood up until now. I saw something from a past life, but it was not very clear.

I saw Ba'ba' supervising everything - the whole drama. He was ever present with His guidance at each step of my life - always near, so near, so close to me that I could hardly imagine - within my thought,

within my mind. I saw Ba'ba' everywhere, in everything! I felt that I was merging with Ba'ba'. I was becoming Ba'ba'. Even when I opened my eyes, I could see Ba'ba' in everything!

Now all the games are over, all the tricks, all the experiments. How long I waited for this day to come - hundreds, thousands, maybe millions of lifetimes? Now the chain is broken. I am free like a bird, free to fly high into the sky. It is like a puzzle, assembled together in a magical and mysterious way. Everything is clear like a crystal

intense. The people are different. There is a new light in their eyes.

I have discovered one reality within, a new reality. Everything seems to shine, to emanate a Love vibration everywhere. Nothing is separated, nothing is an individual entity. Everything has become harmony like a dance. Everything and everyone are in perfect harmony. It is as if you are able to see the hidden link between all the entities. Everything is so clear, so pure, so calm, so charming and lovely, natural, spontaneous, like a flowing river going to merge into the ocean.



After that experience I will never feel the same. Something has died in me and something new has been born. Death and birth are such miracles, so wondrous. Before I was always thinking, "People are giving so much to me and I am not able to give anything. I want something to give to others." Weeping, I was asking God, "Please help God, help me. Help, Help!"

After that experience something has changed. My biological structure has changed, my glands, my whole being. The singing of the birds is different, the trees, the flowers, the colours of nature are more bright and

The life of everyone and every creature, from the stone to the plant, from the animal to human being is flowing.

In the temple of my mind I adore You. Listen to the silence, listen to the beautiful song of Love. Every entity sings and plays the beautiful song of Love, each entity in their own beautiful way!

Dedicated to the lotus feet of my Gurudeva,

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti,
To my mother, to my father,
To all sisters and brothers,
To all spiritual seekers...

Love unbounded

*As I travel on this path of beauty,
My feet, they tender touch
the earth within my heart and my
journey unwinds
Undaunted, searching, to find You
As I climb this granite rock,
My feet spring beneath me,
My hands tingle with Your touch
And my past flashes before my eyes
And I realize, all attachments
Have been given to keep me bound here
Only to be with You -
On this journey, I will unravel
At your license, how to love
And to be free - meaning merged into
You
The more I long, the greater 'I' become
Because you are 'I' in everyone
Love unbounded.*



Jyosna

He Came in My Dream . . .

I was in a lift with one other woman, and I knew we were falling. We were on a very high floor level, and I knew that we could not survive such a fall. I thought that maybe if I lift her in my arms, she will not get the full impact of the fall. So I picked her up and the lift kept falling. We must have hit the ground because all I could feel was my head swollen and out of proportion. I could only crawl, and she had disappeared. I crawled out of the lift, and those who were on the ground, some of whom I could recognize from my past life, did not pay the least bit of attention to me, as if I was somehow normal in my condition. I felt so sad, like anyone feels when they are being neglected. Then I made my way over to another part of the room, and I saw that Ba'ba' was there smiling at me. Then to make me feel better, like a parent might joke with their child to lighten up their mood, He started teaching a funny bodily gesture which one can do when meaning "no" or "yes". I forgot all sadness and the dream ended.

Didi



I was in a big auditorium when someone shouted, "Ba'ba's here!", and pointed to where Ba'ba' sat on a platform. Everyone started running towards Ba'ba' but as I was about to run towards him a member of my family said, "No, don't go!" and held me back. I was torn between going towards Ba'ba' and staying put while Ba'ba' sat and stared at me silently.

I was with a group of people. We were helping Ba'ba' load some large cylinder containers onto the back of a truck. We had finally put the last one on the back of the truck and everyone turned and walked away, including myself. I looked back and saw Ba'ba' struggling to put a container on the truck. I ran back to help him. He then turned and bid me namaskar. I felt a wave of bliss envelope me.

Satya, N. Z.

In my dream, it was the first anniversary of Ba'ba's Mahaprayan and I was in India at Ba'ba's house. For some reason, Ba'ba's body had not been cremated in that year and was being shown to us one last time. When I saw His dead body, I felt very shocked. His face was swollen, His eyes were open, but staring fixed. I felt frightened by His form and felt aversion to it.

Then His body began to move and I felt very afraid. But I realized that He was allowing us one last darshan in His physical presence and I became excited. My aversion to His form disappeared as I felt His sweetness and I began to drink in the blissful vibration of His physical form just as I did when He was physically with us. This moment was so sweet I did not want it to end. At that

moment all my desires were fulfilled by simply experiencing His presence. I wanted for nothing, except for that moment to go on forever.

I could not believe that there were so few people here witnessing this amazing event - only four or five of us. I was afraid others would come to spoil it. I reached down and began to massage His hand and His hand was so, so soft. I knew that this was my Ba'ba'.

But just then, as if the news of His presence had spread, hundreds of devotees came running, grabbing Him, wanting Him. The vibration of the moment changed completely - everything felt so crude. It seemed that people were grabbing Him, not out of love, but out of possession. I could feel He was going to leave. Part of His leg disappeared. I understood that only the most pure ideation was going to keep him with me.

So I picked him up and He turned into the baby Krs'n'a - and I ran with Him, carrying Him on my hip. I ran and ran with all my strength and determination. There were so many people - many trying to capture Him with external shows of devotion, some trying to take Him out of my arms. I knew the only way I could keep Him was to keep my mind completely pure and to run and run with all my strength and determination. I did not know where this strength was coming from - it was not from my body - but some internal urge pushed me forward with such force.

I found myself in a place surrounded by 20' high concrete walls with barbed wire on the top and people were rushing to take Him from me. Mentally I thought that it was simply impossible for me to climb these walls, but I knew that I had to. My feeling to protect my Lord was so strong I jumped this obstacle so easily.

I ran and ran. I was taking my baby Krs'n'a to Vrndavan. I knew that there I would sit with Him, in the

shade of beautiful colourful trees; that He would become my Ba'ba' again and I could love Him and dance for Him.

Finally we reached this Vrindavan, but there were still some people present and I wished they would leave. I knew I should carry Him further, but I also had some fear. My mind turned from Him for a moment and He disappeared.

I felt so utterly alone. The meaning of my life had gone. Dejected, I wandered back to His house, hoping to find His vibration there again. But when I arrived there was a social function underway and there was no spiritual vibration. I felt I was in a desert - alone. I wandered for some time from place to place hoping to find Him again, but there was not even the faintest sense of His vibration.

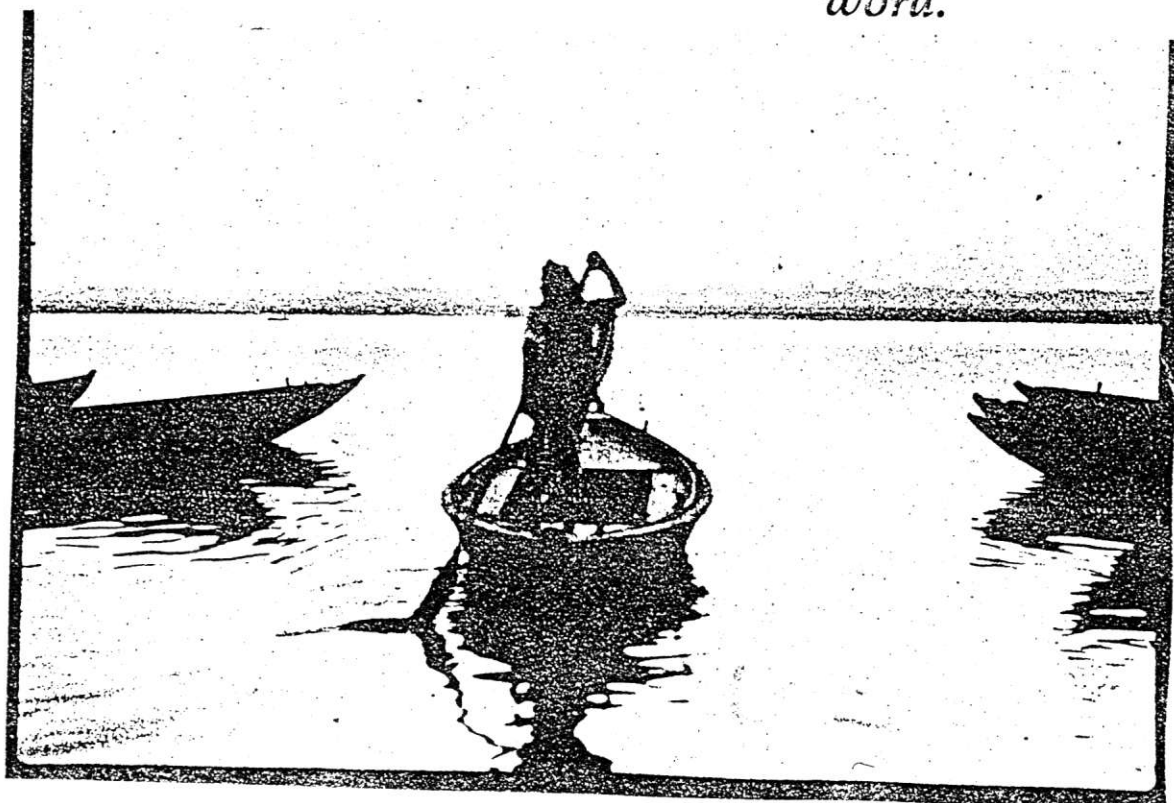
So quickly He had come and gone - the unknown traveller. But born out of my desperation came the clearest realization that my external search was futile. I would only find Him again in deep sadhana.

Jayanti

Parting Words.

Tagore

When I go from hence let this be my parting word, that what I have seen is unsurpassable. I have tasted of the hidden honey of this lotus that expands on the ocean of light, and thus am I blessed - let this be my parting word. In this playhouse of infinite forms I have had my play and here have I caught sight of him that is formless. My whole body and my limbs have thrilled with his touch who is beyond touch; and if the end comes here, let it come - let this be my parting word.



The Student

This is the fourth article in a series on Baba's early life, written about twenty years ago.

In the Railway High School, pandit Ram Chandra Jha, a Samskrta scholar and teacher in the school, was perhaps the only person who attracted Ba'ba' in Jamalpur. It was pandit Ram Chandra Jha who besides giving Him formal education in Samskrta placed old books and classics at His disposal. These the young student read with great relish. He devoured them at such a rapid speed that at times pandit Ram Chandra Jha found it a problem to keep Him supplied with new books and so he put Him onto a new idea. The idea was to try to make new words which would convey the meaning of new ideas more comprehensively.

This was a more engaging occupation, for there was never a shortage of ideas with Prabhat Rainjana. This kept Him engaged in a pursuit which not only pleased Him but also gave Him an opportunity of condensing new ideas and putting them in black and white. Pandit Ram Chandra Jha was so impressed with this young boy that he would often spend hours discussing with Him His new compositions. He also took great interest in listening to the detailed explanation from Prabhat Rainjana of obscure words used in original Vedika literature which Panditji had given Him for reading. Prabhat Rainjana, according to Panditji, very soon became an expert in breaking up a word to its roots and explaining in detail its original meaning. Prabhat Rainjana became a moving dictionary not only in Samskrta but also for English as He could apply the same principles for breaking up English words to their roots and explaining the exact meaning they intended to convey.

The account of his son's proficiency in Samskrta pleased Shrii Lakshmi Narayan very much. That the day-dreaming obstinate boy was doing something concrete, was a great relief to him. It was difficult to force

young Prabhat to do a thing or accept an idea. Sometimes even persuasion failed. For instance, His dislike for non-vegetarian food could not be removed. He, in spite of all compulsion and even greater affectionate persuasion, would not touch meat or

He would select books at random from the college library; books which had nothing to do with the course He had undertaken to study. Sometimes He would select old Samskrta books or some old odd books on philosophy, economics, or politics and read them to His fellow students as if He was a master of that subject.

fish. He could not be kept away from His meditation in the mornings and evenings, howsoever pressing the circumstances. He would get up early in the morning when everyone was in deep slumber and finish His meditation before anyone got up to avoid their asking Him not to waste His time. Shrii Lakshmi Narayan was again very happy when young Prabhat gave him great assistance in organizing the relief work for the victims of the furious earthquake in Monghyr. It was the same group of Prabhat's friends who, under His leadership, actually set an example of efficiency and sympathetic handling of victims for the others to emulate. It was He who raised the standard of relief from mere medical aid to the dispensing of love and affection to the victims. His untiring effort and keen interest in doing something earthly and specific was again a great satisfaction for the

father, particularly from a son who was otherwise so different, who would not listen to any advice with whatever motive it may have been given, who would not move an inch to undertake a work, however compelling it may have appeared to others and who was always lost in something, on some ideas which no one else seemed to know. His interest in Samskrta and His active participation in social service was a great satisfaction to Shrii Lakshmi Narayan just before his death as it was only a short while after the Monghyr earthquake that he took ill and died.

Prabhat Rainjana, being the eldest son, had to face the burden of the family after Shrii Lakshmi Narayana's death. This change, perhaps, made Him more contemplative and serious. He had more or less given up the youthful company of His school friends and spent most of His time in thinking and meditation as if He was planning a big project. He passed His High School Examination from the Jamalpur Railway High School and His mother insisted that He should proceed to Calcutta for higher education. In July the same year, He joined Vidyasagar College as a science student for His Intermediate Examination.

In Calcutta, He faced a different world altogether. He missed the quiet and unpolluted atmosphere of Jamalpur. He missed the forest, the valley of death and the hilltop of Jamalpur. But very soon He discovered similar places in Calcutta also. His maternal uncle, Shrii Sharat Chandra Bose, with whom He stayed, was a bachelor. He was very keen on long evening walks in quiet lonely places and Prabhat Rainjana explored these further to find suitable nooks for His purpose. His elder sister Hari Prabha was married to Shrii Ramani Mohan Bose, who was a practising lawyer in Howrah Courts. Prabhat Rainjana found a very welcome

change in visiting His sister and playing with her little children while in Calcutta. He would often accompany his brother-in-law in his tours and has narrated His unusual experiences very graphically in some of His writings. His fondness of His sister continued for a long time as He sometimes visited her even after leaving Calcutta at Chinchura, where she had been living after her husband's death.

The other lady who looked after Him in Calcutta was an aunt whom Ba'ba' called 'Mago'. She used to see that He got nourishing vegetarian food in time. For Prabhat was very careless about His food. He did not seem to need it as He never complained of being hungry and never asked for food. He would forgo meals one after the other if He did not get them at the appropriate time. Mago whose name was Shrimati Durgabati found it out quickly and saw that every meal was ready in time. The Calcutta house atmosphere was different. His maternal uncle, Shrii Sharat Chandra Bose, besides being a bachelor, was also a highly evolved *tantrika* and keenly interested in spirituality. Prabhat Rainjana had no one's annoyance at

spending as much time as He wanted in meditation and *sadham*. His absence for walks in lonely places was not objected to and even His visits to cremation grounds and burning ghats were not taken notice of.

No one ever saw Him reading His text books. He never made notes from any books. His activities were multifarious. He would

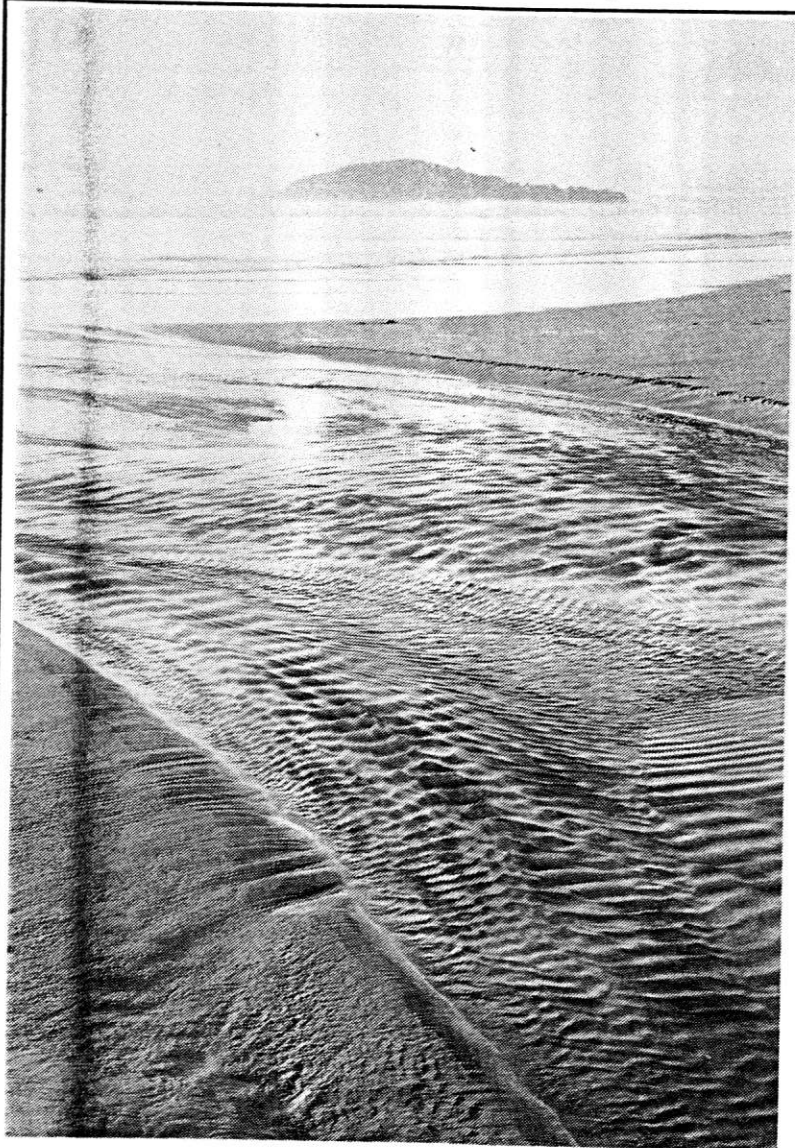
select books at random from the college library; books which had nothing to do with the course He had undertaken to study. Sometimes He would select old Samskrta books or some old odd books on philosophy, economics, or politics and read them to His fellow students as if He was a master of that subject. Students with different courses would flock to Him for removing their difficulties. They

fellow students or other people who were in need of help.

He even took up jobs in the *Hindustan Standard*, *Statesman* and *Ananda Bazaar Patrika* as sub-editor or news editor only to get more money to be able to help more people. He had however to quit these newspapers as He refused to accept the views which He did not consider to be right and hence not worthy of being printed

in the newspapers. He invariably had a difference of opinion with the Chief Editors and had to leave the editorial job of his own accord. He was in fact too straight-forward, too righteous and too frank to suit the newspapers which had to bend to the pressure of circumstances to secure their continuance, while Prabhat Rainjana knew no compromise in His ethical standards even if it meant losing His job.

It is not known how many persons He had already initiated before leaving Jamalpur. No one had seen Him do so, although in Bamunpara, His ancestral home, several unknown persons were seen following Him on His evening walks. In Jamalpur also, grown-up persons would often wait for



Photograph: Ramakrs'n'a

would come to His uncle's house, in Bagh Bazaar in Calcutta City, where He lived. One day, Shrii Sharat Chandra, seeing a number of students solving their difficulties, asked Prabhat if He was giving them private tuition. And it was perhaps at this hint that He actually took up and started giving private tuitions to several boys. The money that He earned from these tuitions was spent in helping poor

Him to go with Him for the evening walk. He had, before He left Jamalpur for Calcutta, earned the reputation of a very good fortune-teller. In a few instances, He had told some people casually about a future incident in their lives which actually happened in the same way. This news spread fast all over the town and people started consulting him. They thought He had studied palmistry and could read the

palmistry and could read the lines very accurately. Before long, however, He had taught palmistry to one of His friends and would direct all such visitors to him. His earlier initiations were confined to strange persons and were also given in very strange circumstances. He had no fixed place for giving initiation nor did He encourage His disciples to bring persons for initiations. They came by themselves and it appeared as if by sheer coincidence or accident.

It was a routine for Ba'ba' to go out for a walk every evening after His return from college. He was often joined by another friend, Ramesh Chandra Sethi. He followed the course of the river Ganges, known in Calcutta as Hoogly, as it was more like a canal with steep banks. His walks were mostly between the Neemtallah burning ghat and Maratha Ditch. This portion of the Hoogly bank was very lonely as people thought it to be infested with criminal and dacoits who hid themselves there. It was feared that anyone visiting this area after dark was sure to be looted at the point of a pistol or a dagger. People went there only in groups with dead bodies for cremation. But for Ba'ba' it was the usual walking strip.

One evening when it was quite dark and His friend, Ramesh Chandra, had not come He sat on a patch of grass on the river bank looking towards the other bank waiting for someone. It was too late for Ramesh Chandra to come; still He waited there. Was it Ramesh or someone else He was waiting for? Only He knew. But soon He heard the sound of footsteps behind Him. Without caring to look back He asked the approaching person to sit down as if His friend Ramesh Chandra had at last come. The newcomer was an utter stranger, not expecting such treatment in that area in the darkness of advancing night was, for a second, overwhelmed but being a hardened criminal soon overcame it and whipping out a large dagger asked Ba'ba' to part with whatever He had with Him. Promising him to give whatever was on His person, Ba'ba' asked him:

"Are you very short of money?"

"No, not now."

"Has it then not become your habit to rob others?"

"Yes, but what else is there to do?"

The iron will of Kalikananda (until then known as Kali Charan Banerjee) was broken. The hardened criminal expressed his desire to become good but no one then trusted him far less treated him nicely and taught him to become good. He had no one who would even sympathise with him or let him live in their house. He was promised the mastery of the universe if only he wanted it and did not fritter away his energy and life in robbery. Kalikananda's desire to change himself having been roused, he wanted to have a bath in the Ganges to wash away his sins before coming close to Ba'ba' to take initiation. He was clad in an undershirt and *lungi* only and with these on he jumped into the Ganges. After his dip in the river he was ready for his initiation. He, a tall and hefty figure, sat before the small and thin figure of the young boy who was going to change the very course of his life. He had no patience to wipe his face or body.

And he sat there, a notorious criminal and robber taking initiation from the unknown preceptor, with drops of water glistening all over his robust body and smooth skin, looking as if the sins within had already started oozing out. The initiation being over, Kalikananda who had addressed Ba'ba' as '*khokha*' (young boy), for he hardly looked fourteen years of age, insisted on escorting Him back home. He explained that this city was full of evil people - pickpockets, robbers and dacoits - who would not hesitate in murdering a lad for a few annas in his pocket. He could not let the *khokha* go back alone through this darkness of the night. Bidding farewell to Ba'ba' at the doorsteps, Kalikananda amidst tears and sobs, refused to take the five paise, which was all the money Ba'ba' had on His person. The more Ba'ba' insisted, the more loudly the hefty criminal started crying. It was with a very heavy heart that Kalikananda accepted the five paise but the feet that took him back were light. For the old Kali Charan was dead and the new

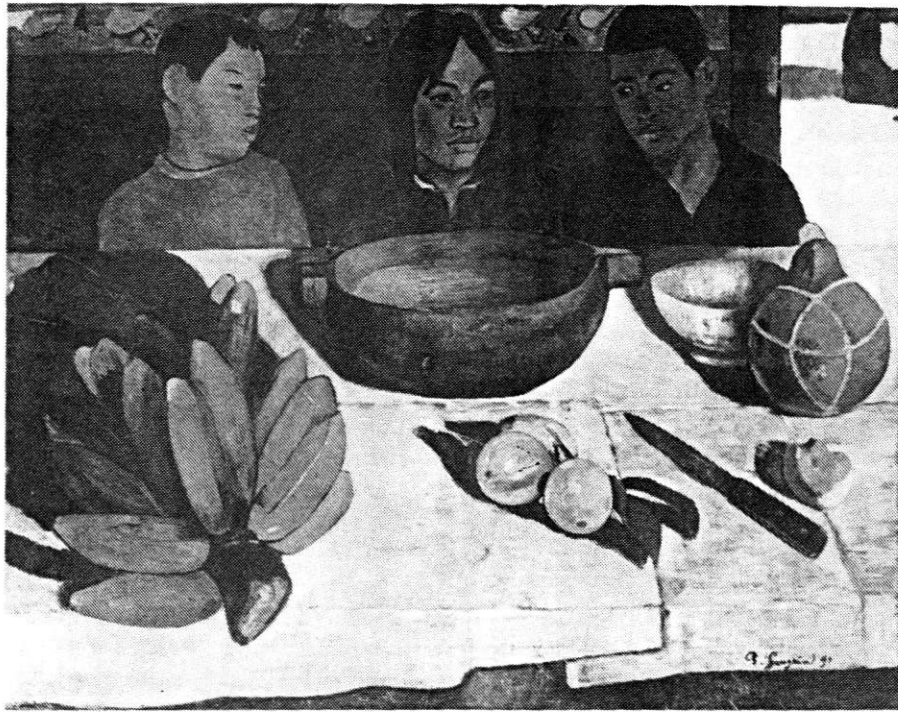
Kalikananda had emerged. This is what happened to people after initiation which, strangely enough, happened to occur by sheer accident or coincidence only.

The affairs of the family in Jamalpur were not quite smooth. They had shifted to a smaller house in Keshavpur. The eldest son could no longer continue His studies at Calcutta in spite of his mother urging Him to do so. He left a bright educational career and came back to Jamalpur to take up a job in the Accounts Department of the Railway Workshop where His father had worked. Prabhat Rainjana was as happy in His new role as an auditor in the Railway Workshop as He was as a student in the Vidyasagar College, as a private tutor, or as an editor in one of the daily newspapers in Calcutta. People back at home eagerly awaited the result of His Intermediate Examination. It had, of course, no excitement for Prabhat Rainjana, not because He had matured, not because He was being called Ba'ba' by many of His disciples in spite of his young age, but because nothing affected Him even right from His infancy. The newspaper from Calcutta publishing the results had arrived by the morning express train known as Upper India Express. They frantically searched for His roll number but it somehow eluded them all.

They came up to Prabhat Rainjana with long-drawn faces not knowing how to break the news to Him of His failure in the examination. He was, as usual, without any expression of expectancy or concern about His result. One of them took courage and said very regretfully that He could not find His roll number in the list of successful candidates. Prabhat Rainjana did not ask to look at the paper, as if He had already seen it. He only asked them to look for His name in the list of the topmost first ten successful candidates published on the front page of the newspaper. They all shouted and jumped with joy, pestering the mother Abharani for sweets but it registered no change in Prabhat Rainjana, who was beyond pleasure and pain, and who was beyond the subtle shackles of time, place and person.

Prabhat Sangiita

No 3856



Le repas des trois Petits Tahitiens, by Gauguin. Photo by Musée National, Paris, courtesy of Jeu de Paume, Louvre.

*A'mi tomay cinini priyo
Tumi a'ma'y sab diyecho*

*A'j a'ma'r pranati nio
Aj bujhechi bhalobesecho*

*Phulete diyecho madhu
Nabhete rajata bidhu
Priiti bhava' sudha' sindhu
Manete man mishiyecho*

*Saptaloker tumi i sera'
Sta'var jangam toma'y bhara'
Cand ta'ra' ye nupure ghera'
Se nupure nece calecho*

*I don't know You beloved
You give everything to me
Today accept my pranam
For today I realized that You love me*

*You pour the nectar into the flowers
The vast blueness into the sky
You are full of love like an ocean of
nectar
Into that ocean (Your mind) my mind
merged*

*In the seven worlds You are the
Greatest
The inanimate and the animate are full
of You.*

Coming Home . . .

Jayanti

Arriving at Ananda Nagar in the early hours of the morning, I felt that I had finally come home. The sky was dark, save for a light beckoning us in the distance. One single light shining forth on that new moon night - like a polestar guiding us onward from darkness to light.

That light shone from Ba'ba's house and as I came closer and closer to this bright light, the feeling grew. I was home.

As the sky was gently bathed with the soft colours of the dawn, a timeless landscape was revealed - stretching on and on toward the horizon. Tantra. If ever there was a physical expression of our spirituality, this was it - timeless, still, immersed in His unending flow.

As the days of this DMC gathering unfolded, this overpowering feeling of 'homeland' became stronger in my mind. It took me some little time to understand, but day by day I understood. Here my physical, mental and spiritual being were in harmony. My internal life could be expressed naturally in the external world. Here, at Ananda Nagar, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to do to sit upon a rock in the early hours of the morning in silent meditation. Everywhere around me people did the same thing - the subterranean flow of spirituality was strong.

I had never visited a Master Unit before. I had never felt that harmony of existence. I had not experienced that unbroken flow of Sattvik vibration. I had lived, worked and studied in places where my sadhana was something that largely remained hidden in my room. And when I walked out of my sanctuary, that

rich internal world - my lifeblood - had to remain hidden. Nothing I saw externally echoed my internal reality. But this first visit to Ananda Nagar gave me the first glimpse that such spiritual honesty was possible.

I once read that Ba'ba' said one month's sadhana at Ananda Nagar is like one year's sadhana elsewhere. After that first visit to Ananda Nagar I felt for the first time a hint of depth in sadhana. And now sometimes when the mind is dry, I remember the moments of meditation at Ananda Nagar - the stillness, the timeless quality - and the mind is transported again to other realms.

In ancient times, yogis used to seek out the kingdoms of powerful kings. There they would pursue their spiritual practices in safety and security. Everything needs a strong foundation before any construction can be attempted - so too with our spirituality. Master Units are our haven, the homelands of our spiritual culture.

Ba'ba' wrote of the importance of environment when He was discussing the importance for spiritual practice of the production of lymph in the body:

"There are certain factors which act as positive and negative catalysts in the manufacture of lymph. A good environment - both physical and psychic - acts as a positive catalyst. An example of such an environment is Ananda Nagar. Positive psychic and positive physical environments are positive catalytic agents, and negative psychic and negative physical environments are negative catalytic agents. If

food is sentient, but if the environment is negative, such a condition is detrimental to mental progress. Cinema halls, prostitute quarters, busy commercial places are negative physical environments. Bad discussions, bad books and bad thoughts prevailing among the local population are negative psychic environments - negative catalytic agents. If the situation is good, it is a positive catalytic agent. Positive, high-grade discussions create a positive psychic environment. Where spiritual aspirants gather, where spiritual discussions are held, such environments serve as positive catalysts. That is why Shiva recommended satsanga or good company for the attainment of salvation. From olden times much importance has been placed on satsanga, because satsanga provides a positive psychic environment.

Sat saungesu bhavamuktir asht-saungesu bandham.

Good company leads to liberation whereas bad company is the cause of bondages."

1987, Calcutta

Whenever I enter upon any of our Master Units, I immediately feel Ba'ba's vibration there. It is like coming home. The land seems to surround one in a spiritual embrace. The bushlands and forests of our Master Units are our Tantra pithas in the making. Going there for silent meditation I feel that this is my real home. For the home is not the place of the house, but the place of the heart - the spiritual heart.

Unity and Structural Solidarity

Ba'ba' places great emphasis upon our unity. He has given so many practices to help us to maintain this strong sense of unity - dharma cakra, paincajanya, festivals, sectorial conferences, seminars. At a recent Brisbane region IRSS, the following quotes were compiled from Ba'ba's writings.

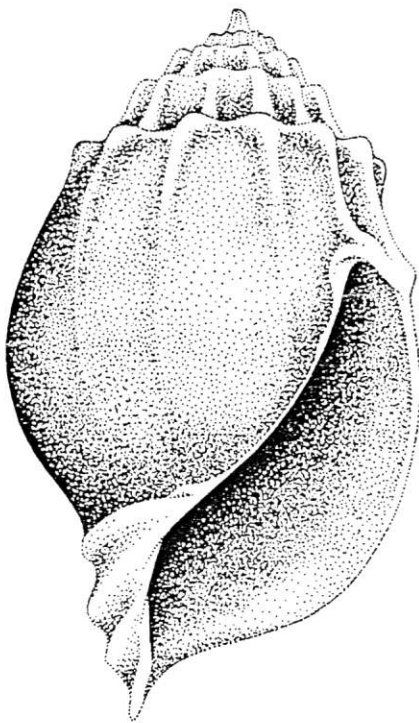
"A country can be conquered by force of arms but the mind cannot. Those who have taken to sa'dhana' to conquer the mind are true soldiers. The aim of Ananda Marga is to conquer the Universal mind. To achieve that, they will have to acquire the qualities of soldiers. They will have to keep specially strict vigilance on unity and order. Do not allow distinctions to crop up among Ananda Margiis. Unity should be maintained even at the risk of one's life. Do not under any circumstances allow individual interest to stand in the way of collective interest." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 18.*

"Always be prepared to serve the Marga. For the sake of the Marga ideology do not be sparing, even of your life. Remember, in laying down one's life with a great ideal in mind, Moks'a is inevitable. This is the reward of death in the war of Dharma." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 19.*

"The indomitable mental force aroused as a result of collective Iishvara-Pranidhana will help you in solving any problem small or big on this earth. It is for this reason that you should always have a zeal to attend the weekly Dharmacakra regularly." *Guide To Human Conduct 61.*

"The meaning of the 'Samgacchadhvam' mantra should be realised in life. Always remain united. Solve all problems, big or small, with unity. Consider misfortunes of one as the misfortune of all - an injury to one as an injury to all." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 16.*

"When a large number of people do Kiirtan . . . (their) concentrated physical and psychic force removes the accumulated sorrows and miseries of the material world." - *Ananda Vacanamrtam Pt 22, p 19.*



"Every morning at five o'clock sadhakas will assemble at a Jagrti, and where there is no Jagrti, at a fixed convenient place, and participate in collective spiritual songs (Prabhat Samgiita), bhajans and kiirtan." *Carya'carya 2, p34.*

"Do not try to assume superiority by belittling others, because the other person's inferiority will become lodged in your mind." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 5.*

"The major part of the slander in the world is based on falsehood. Some indulge in it unknowingly, some

because of their petty interests are hurt, and others, under compulsion of Himsa vritti (harmfulness). With a cool mind you should explain this to the slanderer, but before doing so, make sure there is not even a farthing's worth of truth in his or her statement. If there is even a little fault in you, you should keep your mouth closed and accept it all, and you should thank the person for pointing out your fault and ask for punishment." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 6.*

"Love all, trust in all, but do not give any responsibility to those not established in Yama-Niyama." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 8.*

"To ensure the subsistence of Acaryas, all kinds of sacrifice should be accepted." - *Carya'carya Pt 2, p 9.*

"Ideally, women should also move with their own strength and with the same speed as their male counterparts. In the process of movement, if they feel pain...they should be physically lifted up. But not only women may need assistance, the males may also fall down, and then it will be the duty of women to extend their helping hand. . . . The fact is that we must move together in unison with all." - *Prout in Nutshell 13, p 4."*

"I direct every Ananda Margii to have strict vigilance on any other Ananda Margii in making him or her practise the principles of Yama-Niyama and also to accept calmly directions of other Margiis in this connection." - *A Guide to Human Conduct, p 37.*

"The establishment of an ideal society depends on the mutual help of the members and their co-operative behaviour. This co-operative behaviour depends on the practice of the principles of Yama-Niyama" - *A Guide to Human Conduct, p 36.*

BRAHMACARYA

The correct meaning of Brahmacharya is to remain attached to Brahma. "*Brahme vicaranam Brahmacharyam*". Whenever a person does some work or thinks of doing the work extroversially, he looks upon the object, with which he comes in contact, as a crude finite entity. Because of constant aspiration for material achievement, the mind is so engrossed in material objects that his very consciousness gets crude. The meaning of practising Brahmacharya Sadhana is to treat the object with which you come in contact, as different expressions of Brahma and not as the crude forms. By means of such conception, even though the mind wanders from one object to another, it does not get detached from Brahma because of the Cosmic feeling taken for each and every object. As a result of this *preya sadhana* (extroversial approach) is converted into *shreya sadhana* (introversial approach) and *kama* into *prema*. (*Preya* means attraction towards crude material objects, while *shreya* means attraction towards ultimate reality. *Kama* means desire for finite objects and *prema* means desire for the Great.)

Many misinterpret Brahmacharya as preservation of semen. It should be remembered that neither of the words *Brahma* and *carya* has any relevance to the word semen. Moreover, even physiologically such a preservation of semen is a bluff. Either owing to the disease in certain glands or by the use of similar other processes unless one becomes maimed, it is not possible to observe such Brahma-carya. It is certainly right that if the natural

meaning of the word *Brahmacharya* is accepted (i.e. to feel Cosmic Entity in every material object), control of man's life becomes essential, but such control does not imply disobeying the laws of nature. Control would mean to abide by the nature's laws properly. Prevention of discharge of semen by some special measures or prevention of its surplus formation by fasting is ordinarily termed as so-called *Brahmacharya*. For those who are not married, this so-called *Brahmacharya* (which is really not *Brahmacharya*) has some meaning, because it reduces the possibility of sexual excitement and thus prevents a discharge which may occur due to excitement while awake, asleep or dreaming. This is because when there is no formation of surplus semen, there is no physical desire to waste it. Further consideration will, however, show what this so-called *Brahmacharya* is worth. Are the prevention of formation of surplus semen and the loss of surplus semen not one and the same thing? All that can be said is that the first alternative is good for the unmarried and the second for the married.

Persons who, by different suppressive methods want to prevent the discharge of semen, have bad reactions of their body and mind. Their bodies grow rough and lack in lustre. A suppression of the sexual desire results in other desires specially anger taking a more terrible form. In the olden times only the actual meaning of Brahmacharya was accepted. Later, when society was dominated by the intellectuals, the intelligentsia, the so-called monks who had taken to

complete exploitation, thought that if any ordinary citizen were allowed to pursue spiritual practices they may lose the machinery of exploitation of which they were so fond at any moment. If the common man is inspired by the spiritual ideals, their rationality will grow and grow. Therefore, the populace will have to be kept maimed and helpless. Fear and inferiority complex will have to be infused in man to exploit him. They found that such exploited mass consisted of ordinary worldly people most of whom were married. If therefore, the loss of semen was any how declared anti-religious, they would be able to gain their end without difficulty. The result was promptly achieved. Ordinary worldly people began to think that they, by leading a married life, committed a serious wrong, a heinous sin and indulged in activities against *Brahmacharya*. The monks observed celibacy and were therefore, far superior. The so-called recluses took advantage of the situation and have, without difficulty, been exploiting the society.

Whether these recluses in fact are '*naesthika brahmachariis*' (those who do not waste semen at all) cannot be decided by arguments. This can be decided by medical test only. It can be said without doubts that many of the so-called monks will not pass this test.

Marriage is a natural function like bath, food, sleep, etc. Therefore, there is nothing to be condemned in it, nor does it go against *Dharma*. When a great person or an elevated sadhaka is not prohibited from taking food etc.

there is no reason why he should be debarred from marriage. But proper control is no doubt highly needed over food and sleep, nay, in every walk of life. The lack of such control causes disease. Food is essential for life; but absence of control over eating causes indigestion. A bath is refreshing but absence of control over bath i.e. long continued bath would make one catch cold. Similarly marriage has its uses but absence of control in married life would cause different diseases in body and mind.

Marriage is slightly different from other natural functions in life, such as eating, sleeping, etc. Marriage is not so essential for life as are food and sleep. The need for marriage differs with individuals. That is why in the opinion of Ananda Marga every individual has complete freedom in the matters of marriage. For example, marriages of those persons who suffer from some physical or mental disease, or who are not financially well off, or whose present circumstances are not favourable for marriage, (i.e. where marriage can cause unhappiness) are not desirable. Those who are constantly engaged in the fulfillment of an ideal or those who have to spend the greater part of their day in earning their livelihood or in other mental occupations, should better not marry, because they do not find it possible to fulfill their family commitments properly. Marriages of such persons are harmful to the society

in many cases. Though marriage is not desirable for those, who are suffering from some disease or whose circumstances are not favourable to get married, there may be a possibility of their indulging in vices stealthily

exercise control in every sphere of life whether big or small. Such control does not imply killing the desire but controlling it. Desires and tendencies are natural attributes of a living being. Therefore, those who want to kill the desires should

better adopt some easy method of committing suicide instead of pursuing any difficult method of spiritual practices. I do not find any reason in support of the so-called *Brahmacarya* for those who are Shaeva, Shakta, Vaesnava or who believe in Puranas: because their deities Shiva, Visnu, Krs'n'a and others were what is commonly known as worldly people. In Purana the names of their wives and children are also mentioned.

Dharma is based on *satya*, "*Dharma sahna yatra na satyamasti*" - Where there is no *satya* there is no *Dharma*. This peculiar interpretation of *Brahmacarya* may contain anything and everything save except *satya*. Hence there is no *Dharma* or *Brahma* in it.

because of not being married. To avoid this probability they should work for the attainment of some high ideals or take to some spiritual practices of laborious type. Psychological degeneration inherent in the suppression of tendencies can be avoided only by an effort to fulfill a lofty ideal.

It has been said earlier and it is being repeated that one has to

Man has to progress towards the ultimate by accepting what is simple truth. That is the path of a *sadhaka*. That is the path of *Dharma*. It may be a privilege to parasitic religious professionals in denying what is simple truth in practical life, but thereby the sanctity of *Dharma* cannot be maintained. It is not the path of *satya*, it is what is called hypocrisy.



To Colour a Warrior is the story of the adventures of John, a nineteen year old Australian, who meets up with a Chinese artist cum economics professor who learned Ananda Marga meditation while in a Chinese jail. Their delightful experiences include bush outings, starting cooperatives, a trip to Ananda Nagar; where they are attacked by communists and John gets initiated, and the initial stages of the depression. All the while, John is learning about art and awakening spiritually. It's a story for young and old alike. The following is a selection from the book, and picks up the story at Ananda Nagar, where John has been volunteering at the animal sanctuary.

One day, as I was trying my best to move a large granite stone, I felt someone watching me from behind. I thought to myself, "Whoever this is, why don't they come and help rather than just stare." I turned around to see who it was and was shocked to find a large and very orange orangutan staring back at me. I jumped back in shock. We stared at each other for an instant. He shuffled towards me and I backed up. He came up to the stone, grabbed his arms around it and moved it out of the way with very little effort at all. When he finished, he looked up at me, wrinkling his eyebrows and grunted "hoo hoo," which I think meant; "See what I've done for you." Then he curled his arms over his head and did a little dance. I burst out laughing and he squealed back at me with pleasure. He walked up to me and formed a perfect namaskar, placing his palms together, first at his forehead, then moving them down to his heart. I did namaskar in return and said that my name was John and that I was pleased to make his acquaintance, "and thanks for moving the rock."

Soon a middle-aged woman walked up to us. She introduced herself as Gaorii. "And this is Girija. You'd know that she was a female if you knew anything about oranges."

"Being so strong, I thought she was a male; sorry Girija," I replied. Girija shook her head at me.

"Girija understands over a hundred English words, about two hundred in French and perhaps another two hundred words in the Bengali language. She communicates in sign language," Gaorii added. Girija and I stared at each other. I stuck my hand into my bag and pulled out an apple. I extended it to Girija and she eagerly took it. Girija was also carrying a small side bag and reached into it and pulled out a package of Indian biscuits. She folded back the paper wrapper covering it and offered it to me. I reached out and took a few. A new friendship was thus consecrat-

ed.

From then on during my stay at Ananda Nagar, Girija and I were almost inseparable. At about the same time that I would come back from my morning bath she would appear in the entrance to our room. We would often work together landscaping compounds for endangered animal species. I would sing a few pop tunes that I remembered from home and Girija would do her best to hum along as we worked.

I found out later that Girija had been part of a travelling circus in France. She knew acrobatics and was



TO COLOUR A WARRIOR

Acarya Mayadhiishananda Avadhuta

A Proutist Tale of Adventure

a star performer. Her owner would beat her constantly and kept her in a cage, rarely letting her out for walks. Paul, a friend of Dada Koshalananda's, was working at the circus at the time as a stage hand. He rescued her from her prison one night and flew with her to India soon after. He hid Girija in a large dog container. She would whimper like a dog whenever she was passing through any inspection. No one thought to look in the container. Paul was now also at Ananda Nagar, developing puppet plays to teach nutrition to the villagers.

Girija was in charge of feeding the many animals coming to find sanctuary at Ananda Nagar. She knew just what food each animal required. She had an intuitive sense of when to feed them and how much. She would often scrounge particular treats for those under her care. The zebras especially appreciated some sweet buns. The ostrich loved dates, and the two elephants were both partial to comfrey leaves. Needless to say, when Girija came around with her treats, a mixed chorus resounded through the sanctuary compound. As we walked through Ananda Nagar together after work, we would collect contributions for the care of the animals from village children or people at the worksites. An apprentice baker from a nearby village kept a special pile of sweet buns that we would collect on Wednesdays. Thanks mainly to Girija I was getting to know every one and many things quickly.

One day Girija and I went to visit the primary school. The teacher for the nine to eleven year olds, Pradiip Ghanda, was teaching them about biology the day we came. He and his class had come out to the sanctuary to observe the eating habits of a young elephant whose mother had been killed by a hunter. They were going to chart its progress day to day and analyse its stool. One student said they should weigh it weekly if they really wanted to mark its progress. Mr. Ghanda just laughed and said he could have the task of designing a scale for the elephant if he wanted to. The young student said he would do just that and had already visited the engineering works where his father

was an apprentice to ask for advice.

Mr. Ghanda introduced Girija and myself to the class. The children giggled when Girija gave them a namaskar and they returned the greeting, chanting in unison: "namaskar Girija." Girija pulled out a bouquet of nicely wrapped flowers that she had hidden in her bag and placed them in a jar on the teacher's desk. "I'll get water", one young girl volunteered. One boy in the back started crying, he was afraid. The boy sitting next to him said he was worried that Girija would attack him. He had heard stories in his village about huge apes that would attack children when they slept at night. Mr. Ghanda came over to the boy and soothed him, rubbing his back. He crouched down next to him and spoke softly. When the boy seemed more relaxed, Mr. Ghanda took him by the hand and walked up to Girija. Girija looked him in the face and made the sign for "have no fear", as she curled her fingers towards her and tapped them on her chest. I explained the meaning to Mr. Ghanda and he explained it to the boy and the rest of the class. The little boy and the others imitated Girija's movement. Mr. Ghanda explained that he had invited Girija so the class could see that some animals had developed a high intelligence and that it was also possible for them to feel happy and free living among human beings.

Girija curled one hand over a clenched fist and shook her hands firmly. "Girija wants to tell you, that she wants to be friends with all of you," I said. Then the class copied this in unison. I briefly told the class about Girija's sad beginnings in the French circus and the story about how she was smuggled into India. I told how she whimpered like a dog when she passed through customs. I winked at her on cue and she whimpered. The class roared with laughter.

Mr. Ghanda explained that her vocal chords were not like those of human beings and that, while she was capable of a wide range of tones and sounds, no matter how intelligent she was, she would never be able to talk like a human being. She could however, say a few words. I looked at Girija and made the sign for mother or mata in Bengali. Girija lifted her head

back and stretched her throat. "maaaaaa aaaaa" Girija said. The class was spellbound. It sounded very much like the Bengali word.

After that day, the children were constantly visiting the sanctuary after school. They would often bring Girija a present an apple, a flower or something they had made at school. They would ask her to say the word in sign language. She would sign the word and they would mimic it. Then Girija would direct them to the appropriate animal to give the item of food. Sometimes she would put it aside, if it were not the animal's feeding time. Little did Girija realize that the walls of Mr. Ghanda's classroom were plastered with all sorts of drawings of her. One showed her dressed in a bright red sari while another showed her doing acrobatics at the circus. In another, which was drawn by the boy who had been so afraid at first, she was swinging through the trees yelling out "High folks. Don't be afraid of me!" The class had studied Girija's origins in the jungles of Borneo. Little did Girija realise that her visit had sparked a real thirst for learning which spanned the fields of biology to geography, economics to psychology, linguistics to education. The class split up into smaller groups which would study various aspects of Girija's life.

"Congratulations on a well written, exciting novel."

Ken Bullock
Creative writing lecturer
Cook University, Australia

"I can't wait until it is published. We loved reading it."

Kamini
High school drama teacher
Adelaide, Australia

"I couldn't put it down; it was so absorbing and easy to read"

Naciketa
Lecturer
College of Technical & Further
Education, New Zealand

The book has just been published and is available from Proutist Universal Publications or Ananda Marga Publications.

GREAT SAGES

Sam'artha Ramadas, 1608 - 1681

Manorainjana

Early Years

A lean young man stands waist deep in the sparkling water of the Godavari. His body sways with a mudra and his voice rises and falls to the mantra Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Rama. His eyes are dark and hawk-like above his finely hooked nose, but they are lost to the beautiful scene around him. His intense *tapasya* had taken him beyond the confines of the material plain.

For twelve joyous years he rose at four in the morning and did Ramajapa in the river till eleven. He then took his bowl into the local village of Dangle to beg and then return to the river by three in the afternoon to recommence his *japa*. This discipline was the anvil, the mantra the hammer, and the result a finely crafted tool of will and strength, determination and love.

In the twelve years he recited three and a half crores of Ramajapa, and such was the strength of his devotion that he gained many *siddhis* (occult powers) as a result, but he never squandered them, keeping them safe in the treasure chest of his heart. They were gifts from the Lord, how could he, the Lord's servant, be wasteful of them?

From his earliest years he had heard the Lord whispering to him, calling him forth. When his father, a Brahmin, died he was only six but it brought home to him the transitory nature of life and he set about studying all the traditional learning in both Samskṛta and his mother tongue, Maharashtri. His memory was prodigious and by the age of twelve he had memorized all there was to learn from books.

At this point his mother,

no doubt aware of her son's spiritual yearnings, sought to keep him close to her by arranging his marriage. On the day of the wedding he stood before the people opposite his young bride. In his mind ran the words: "How can I marry when my heart belongs to another?" The priest pulled a veil around and between bride and groom, as was the local custom, and solemnly intoned, "Savadhan, now comes the time, be careful." At this moment Ramadas was to have taken the bride's hand but instead he took the words as a warning and fled from the hall to the river and his *tapasya*!

Travels and Ochre Robes

When he was twenty-four he left the river to begin his mission. He travelled all over India teaching, rebuilding temples and establishing ashrams. When he was in the Himalayas he was visited by Shrii Rama who ordained him a monk and gave him an ochre robe.

As he could achieve whatever he desired he was given the name Sam'artha and because he was the servant of Rama he took the name Ramadas. It was during this period of travel that the fame of Sam'artha Ramadas spread throughout India.

When he was thirty-six he made his way to his parental home. There he stood outside the house and begged for food calling, "Jaya Jaya Raghuvira Sam'artha". His sister-in-law recognized him and excitedly brought out his mother who in her old age had gone blind. She cried out, "My child, my vision has failed, I cannot see you." Sam'artha saw her as his Rama

and bowing low before her touched her feet. As his mother's tears ran down her cheeks, vision returned to her swimming eyes which now danced for joy at the sight of her son.

Bhakti and Prama: The Teachings of Shrii Ramadas

Ramadas built his ashram near his ancestral home in a place called Chabal on the banks of the river Krs'n'a. And there he taught many illustrious disciples. In the following years he built temples to Rama and Anjaneya, established 71 Maths and wrote many books.

His disciples presided over the maths and were instrumental in spreading the cult of bhakti and establishing the happy blending of Sam'vrtii and Nivrtti which leads to a perfect balance in the spiritual sphere. This balance is necessary as it encourages full development of all human potentialities in the physical, psychic and spiritual sphere.

Ba'ba' writes lyrically of this balance, "The physical stratum may be compared to a sweet and lovely radiant bud which is about to blossom into a flower. In the process of metamorphosis from the early stage to the matured stage of bud lies its inherent vitality, its rhythmic and graceful dynamism. The psychic stratum can be compared to a newly blown flower full of charm - the tenderness of its petals, the softness of its pollens, the sweetness of honey fill the life with an exuberance of joy and vitality. And the third factor, that is, the spirituality is simultaneously the witnessing entity and the guiding entity. All the strata together create the Prama' Trikon'a or Loka Trikon'a of

entities." (Prama', p 22-23)

To Ramadas devotion was the key to spiritual success. His love for Rama has been captured for all time in the Ramayana, one of the best loved epics in India's cultural treasury.

Social Service

Ramadas was not just a spiritual giant. The greatness of his personality placed him, much against his will, on the political stage of 17th century India, a country invaded by the Muslims, and increasingly under pressure from English and French imperialist aspirations.

His most famous disciple was Shivaji. He was at first refused by Ramadas who thought the intrusion of the political world into his spiritual environment might disturb his ascetic life. But, when Ramadas thought of the cultural, psychic and economic oppression his people suffered at the hands of these powers he relented and wrote to Shivaji: "We live in very bad times, when our *dharma* is languishing, our temples are destroyed and idols broken before our eyes. Religious life is at a discount. Hindus are losing faith in themselves and their way of life. They feel proud and pleased to imitate the dress and manners of Muslim rulers. To protect our *dharma* and infuse fresh vigour into religion, I believe you are chosen by God."

Guru and disciple had a close relationship frequently touched with a picturesque

symbolism. Once when Shivaji asked for some *prasad* Ramadas gave him a packet containing a coconut, a little clod of earth, a few pebbles and some horse manure! What could this mean? Shivaji thought for a long time before coming to the following conclusion: the Guru wanted him to be pure inside with a hard exterior like the coconut; he must care for the earth and make it fertile; he must use rocks and stones to raise large forts; and he must have a strong cavalry in the army.

This '*prasad*' marked the beginning of Shivaji's great imperial career (1659-1680).

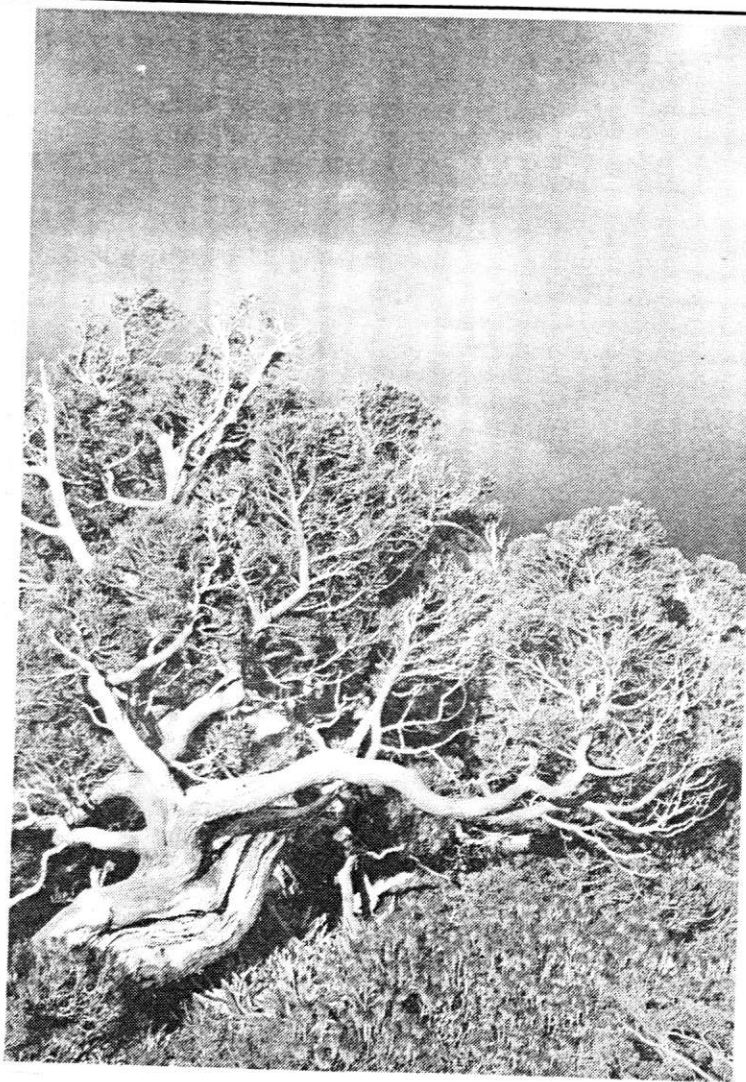


Photo: Ramakrs'n'a

When Shivaji was at the height of his power he found his Guru begging in the street. As he went by he put into his bowl a

palm-leaf gift-deed making over to him the entire kingdom, declaring himself to be his servant. Ramadas accepted for his master and blessed Shivaji saying, "Henceforward this kingdom belongs to Shrii Rama and you are His servant. Remember this always and act accordingly." Shivaji was overjoyed and adopted the ochre flag as the symbol of renunciation and greeted everyone with a "Rama Rama".

A Saint's Duty

Despite the attentions lavished on him by his princely disciple Ramadas lived humbly. He felt and taught that saints should be practical and versatile. In all their actions they should lead people to the service of God. They should be as low as the low so as to understand their hearts and thus point out wrongs while praising merits. In this way all can be lead upon the path of righteousness, service and love straight to the lap of P a r a m a Purus'a.

References:

Anna, Saints of India (Shrii Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1986). P.R.Sarkar, Prama' (Ananda Marga Publications, 1987)

Lotus Mine.

*One day when the lotus bloomed, alas,
my mind was straying, and I knew it not.*

*My basket was empty and the flower remained unheeded.
Only now and again a sadness fell upon me, and I started up
from my dream and felt a sweet trace of a strange fragrance
in the south wind. That vague sweetness made my heart ache
with longing and it seemed to me that it was the eager breath
of the summer seeking for its completion. I knew not then
that it was so near, that it was mine, and that this perfect
sweetness had blossomed in the depth of my own heart.*



Tagore.

Photo: Narada Muni

Festival

Jayanti

The creek bed on our Master Unit had almost run dry. The water had slowed to a trickle and was becoming stagnant. The forest was parched, dry and lifeless. Its trees begging for water.

Then it rained - and rained and rained - with such force. The creek was impassible. New rivulets were spontaneously created everywhere. We were awash.

But the rains brought with them freshness and newness. New life was breathed into the creek - the water flowing strongly and swiftly. The old undergrowth cleared out making way for new growth. Rocks had been re-arranged by the swift flowing waters and new sand banks formed. The children rediscovered it as if it was a new found land. Its life force runs afresh.

Human life is like the life of the river. Individually and collectively, our life is systaltic. Sometimes our river runs so dry - and then it rains and we flow again with full force - revived and renewed.

"While moving forward and working in individual life, people sometimes become tired; this happens to everyone. Even the women of the house while working continuously sometimes complain of their daily drudgery. 'We can no longer tolerate this monotony.' Those who are employed in factories also say, 'We cannot bear this drab and dull existence any longer.' Every day they come and go in the same boring way, and because of this continuous monotony, people lose all interest in life. They become totally dissatisfied with the world, and their minds become assailed with cynicism." (Ba'ba', "On Festivals", A Few Problems Solved Pt 5, p 16).

The mundane can so easily grow and grow to overwhelm us. Our hearts become heavy and our movement dull. But our lives are meant

for something more than these mere mechanics of life, something more glorious.

"Mere movement is not the only characteristic of life; the second characteristic is buoyancy of spirit. Not only should people move, but they should also move in such a way that shows they are full of vitality, so that the throbbing pulse of their lives will be a source of inspiration to others. This is the true characteristic of life." (Ba'ba', On Festivals, p 16)

Both in individual and collective life, from time to time we feel the need to fuel the fire of our hearts, to fill our lives with new inspiration and to feel that our life has started afresh. Festivals are one way to infuse this spirit of freshness into our lives. In Samskṛta, the word for festival is *utsava* meaning an occasion which gives human beings fresh inspiration to live a new life.

In our Western culture, Christmas and New Year is our 'festive' season. This year our four year old son, Ajit, has without any encouragement, quite independently developed his own interest in Christmas. It is the sense of something magical and wondrous which attracts his mind. And so, a little reluctantly, we have opened our doors a little to Christmas. A Christmas tree has appeared and been trimmed. The days are being counted down until Christmas. I say 'reluctantly' because most of the festivals of our Western culture have degenerated so that while they once held some spiritual significance, their base has now become largely material. It has turned from culture to pseudo-culture.

It is easy, in rejecting this pseudo-culture, to also turn our backs upon culture as well as a reaction. By closing the doors on the regenerative powers of festivals, we can make our lives dull and lustreless - and our world seems unattractive to our chil-



dren who see the bright lights of pseudo-culture shining beyond. With no charm to fill our lives, it is easy to become hard and cynical. One of our Indian Dadas was recently describing to me all the festivals they enjoyed as children in India. He described the way they anticipated them, prepared for them and enjoyed them - as a family and a community. And I could see easily from the picture he painted that with this rich social fabric, children would not become bored and cynical. Rather this sense of wonder and amazement would come to fill their lives often.

In Ananda Marga, we have

many festivals to celebrate which may enrich the lives of ourselves and our children. The speciality of these festivals is that they are not simply social functions, but all have spiritual significance and so enrich our lives on all levels - physical, mental and spiritual.

These festivals offer us an opportunity to begin to weave a new cultural fabric that can uplift our hearts and minds.

"When people become tired and uninspired, when they can no longer look towards the future with hope, when their colourful dreams are shattered, at that time the sweetness of a festival brings new joy and vigour in

life. Thus in individual and collective life, the importance of festivals is tremendous. One should always remember that festivals should be such that all can take part in them without any ostentatious display of wealth, and with an upsurge of their life force. And these festivals should be conducted in such a way that people take part in them from a spontaneous inner urge. I hope that you will make such arrangements so that all are attracted towards your festivals which will be more and more charming - and this will bring about your collective welfare." (Ba'ba', On Festivals, p 18)

Some Ananda Marga Festivals:

- Ananda Purnima ***** Ba'ba's birth day on the full moon in May.
 Shravanii Purnima ***** The anniversary of the first initiation in Ananda Marga.
 Sharadotsava ***** Children's Day, Public Day, Fine Art's Day, Music Day and Vijayotsava (October).
 Diipavali - ***** The celebration of light held on the darkest night of the year (in northern Hemisphere).
 Bhratrdvitiya ***** Brothers' Day (November).
 New Year's Day ***** At Sunrise of the New Year.
 Vasantotsava ***** Colour festival, held on the first full moon in Spring.

In the next issue of Pranam we will give the dates for these festivals and hope that people will contribute articles on each of these festivals, describing the inner meaning of the festival and their personal experiences.

On New Year's Day:

"Each New Year's Day is the starting point of a pulsation in history. So during the stage of pause and speed at the New Year, people look back and discover that they have moved forward leaving many things behind; and they also look ahead and see many things in front of them - they realize that they will have to do many things in the future. Accordingly they make many plans and programmes to utilize the coming year in a fruitful way . . .

Nanyaha pantha' vidyadte anyananya.

"There is no other way for a living community besides this."

This is not the time for laziness; rather it is the time for intense activity. Let every moment of your valuable time be used properly. With these words, I conclude my discourse."

Ba'ba', "Bengali New Year", A Few problems Solved Pt 5, p 9.

FASTING DAYS

January

January 1 - Ekadashi
 January 5 - New Moon
 January 16 - Ekadashi
 January 20 - Full Moon
 January 31 - Ekadashi

February

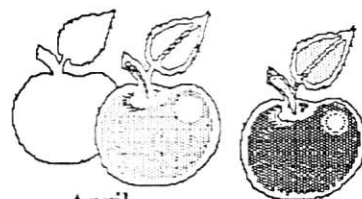
February 4 - New Moon
 February 14 - Ekadashi
 February 18 - Full Moon

March

March 1 - Ekadashi
 March 5 - New Moon
 March 15 - Ekadashi
 March 19 - Full Moon
 March 30 - Ekadashi

April

April 3 - New Moon
 April 13 - Ekadashi
 April 17 - Full Moon
 April 29 - Ekadashi



Ananda Vanii

O human beings, move on toward subtlety along the path of the Cosmic Sound (Omnikara). Do not run after any apparently sweet but actually static mirage. First establish yourselves in sentiency, and then finally merge yourselves in Brahmahood (Supreme Consciousness). Arrive at the stance whence the Cosmic sound has emerged. Awaken your dormant spirit of humanity by dint of your sadhana and utmost dedication. Arouse your divine wisdom and merge your immaculate divinity into the endless flow of Cosmic grandeur. Attain that Supreme state for which you have been struggling through innumerable hardships since time immemorial. Today you have got the golden opportunity to declare yourselves as true human beings.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurtijii.